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ABSTRACT

The book is a typological study of grammatical roles, such as agent, patient, beneficiary, and of grammatical relations, such as subject (direct) and indirect object. In addition it is concerned with the devices, such as the passive, that alter the identities in such roles and relations. Its objective is to suggest a consistent and reasonably simple overall framework within which grammatical issues, particularly in different languages, may be illustrated and discussed. The book's focus is not on theoretical discussion, but on similarities and differences between languages and does not assume identical or universal features across languages. The introductory chapter defines key terminology and describes the book's general approach. Subsequent chapters address these topics in some detail: roles and relations; accusative, ergative, and agentive systems; syntactic relation; passive; antipassive; topic and inverse systems; and causatives. A glossary, reference and citation index, index to languages cited, and subject index are appended. (MSE)

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